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WEATHER GOSSIP.

DWELLERS in our tight little island are often twitted by Continental neighbours for permitting the weather to monopolise casual conversation. The fickleness of our weather is as proverbial as that of fortune, and gives rise to inconvenience and grumbling. Rain spoils our scant summer holidays when we should be inhaling Nature's ozone at some seaside resort. The bracing breeze that last night promised well for a sail with a wet sheet and flowing sea, was but singing its death-song like the swan of fable. Next morning the white-winged yachts lie like 'painted ships upon a painted ocean.' Thaw sets in almost before skating has become an accomplished fact, and the newly-burnished skates are perforce put away to rust. Our seasons somehow appear to have become mixed, and that venerable oracle, the oldest inhabitant, hankers after the good old-fashioned Christmas of his remote youth. We have neither marrow-solidifying blizzards—as the Americans term their severe snow-storms, which deal death and destruction all around—nor torrid waves that parch up plants and enervate animals. It is the extreme uncertainty and inconstancy of our weather that is the trouble with us.

Explorers who have endured the extreme temperatures of the polar regions and of the tropics, express a preference for the regions of the Arctic. Exertion may possibly warm a man; but to keep cool under a vertical sun is out of the question. We happily enjoy the golden mean so bepraised by poets. Prayers for dry weather, or perchance for rain, are occasionally offered up in our churches; but a *Te Deum* is sung in certain West India places of worship at the close of each year's hurricane season. Gallant Benbow's remark respecting the climate of Labrador is to the point: 'There is a winter of nine months, and dreadful bad weather the other three.' It is jocularly asserted that the wind is sometimes so violent in Colorado that if a man should have had his hat blown off, he forthwith sends a telegram to the next leeward station in order to have

his head-covering stopped in transit. Our own weather is accorded an unenviable notoriety in the jingling rhyme of the *Ingoldsby Legends*:

In a climate so very unsettled as ours,
It's as well to be cautious and guard against showers;
For though about One, you've a fine brilliant sun,
When your walk or your ride is but barely begun,
Yet long ere the hour-hand approaches the Two,
There is not in the whole sky one atom of blue,
But it 'rains cats and dogs,' and you're fairly wet
through

Ere you know where to turn, what to say, or to do.

This is mild condemnation compared with that of the would-be convivial cheap tripper chafing under the burden of his wasted opportunities as he gazes ruefully at a leaden-hued sky and sodden surroundings. A tourist, rainbound in an hotel at Bala, is said to have vindicated his outraged sense of the fitness of things as follows:

The weather depends on the moon as a rule,
And I've found that the saying is true,
For at Bala it rains when the moon's at the full,
And it rains when the moon's at the new.
When the moon's at the quarter, then down comes
the rain;
At the half, it's no better, I ween;
When the moon's at three-quarters, it's at it again;
And it rains besides mostly between.

The belief that some connection exists between the moon and terrestrial weather is not so prevalent as in the days of antiquity; but this supposititious lunar influence forms the basis of tenacious weather proverbs. Even now, however, lunar tables for forecasting the weather are given in cheap diaries, and advocates are not wanting. Samuel Butler, in *Hudibras*, tells of a seer who

With the moon was more familiar
Than e'er was almanac well-willer;
Her secrets understood so clear
That some believed he had been there.

A story is told of a belated pleasure-seeker exasperated by a continuous downpour of rain while his barometer index pointed to 'Fair.' He took the offending instrument into the open air

and thus addressed it: 'Now, see for yourself, since you won't take my word for it.'

A barometer indicates the weight of the atmosphere above it, and is familiarly spoken of as a weather-glass, because changes in wind and weather attend changes in atmospheric pressure so long as the observer does not alter his position. If, however, he take his barometer to the top of a mountain, to the bottom of a coal-mine, or to some distant land, he would find that the words of weather-warning placed around its face would be utterly useless. Hence probably the unsuspected cause of our tourist's temper. Miss Braddon has almost exhausted her copious vocabulary in an attempt to delineate the characteristics of 'a bad, determined, black-minded November day,' on which the fog-fiend is all-powerful to persuade a miserable mortal to put a period to her existence. On the other hand, an amusing anecdote is related of the late Captain Fothergill, which tends to prove that even a foggy day may not be so black as it is painted. That commander, homeward-bound from protracted service in Indian waters, came on deck one cold morning in November when his good ship was running up the English Channel, cleaving her way through a dense fog. Addressing the officer of the watch, he said: 'Ha! This is what I call something like. None of your confounded eternal blue skies here. A fellow can see his own breath now.'

Personal peculiarities and poetic license account for much of the diversity of opinion on the weather. Our bodies are bad substitutes for barometers and thermometers. Many shudder at the idea of an easterly wind; and yet Charles Kingsley has given this bitter blast unqualified praise:

Welcome, wild North-easter!
Shame it is to see
Odes to every zephyr,
Ne'er a verse to thee.

Eliza Cook is probably more in touch with the generally received opinion where she sings:

But the north-east gale tells a different tale
With a voice of fearful sound,
When a loved one is under a close-reefed sail
On the deck of an outward bound.

Some verses attributed to the Hon. Mrs Wrottesley describe the beauties of Gibraltar, but recommend that it should be shunned when the wind is in the east:

Why do things turn all sour and musty?
And why has the mail not come in?
Why is everything out of doors dusty?
And everything dripping within?
Why has such a one murdered his brother?
For these facts, if a reason you'd find,
The same cause does for one as the other—
'Tis that horrible easterly wind!

Sir Henry Taylor advised a young friend not to prefer his suit when the wind was in the east, lest his lady-love reject him; and an old proverb would have us not ask a favour when the wind sits in that quarter. Every civilised nation has a Weather Department, issuing forecasts; but twenty-four hours is an extreme limit of certainty. Better than this cannot be done at present, and those who trouble to check the weather forecasted and that actually experienced

will obtain different results, even though they live near each other. Last winter, snow fell fast on one side of Westminster Bridge; but not a flake fell on the other side. No system of forecasting could have indicated this sharp line of demarcation. Scientists were once opposed to weather forecasting; and even now comic journals pillory our official forecasters, who claim that more than eighty per cent. of success crowns their efforts in all weathers. Some complain of the oracular nature of the warnings worded after the fashion: 'The Romans will conquer if the King be killed.' The question naturally arises, as to which King is meant. A warning was thus rendered by a four-year-old youngster, proud of his acquirements: 'It's to be fair and showery, with norf wind and rain; also warmer and snow by high wind and sleet when it clears.' Nothing like a mixture of all possible weather ingredients to ensure a semblance of success! 'Are you fond of fiction?' asked Brown. 'Yes,' answered Smith. 'The first thing I read in the daily paper is the weather forecast.' This unkind cut seems unwarranted. During the Soudan war, when gallant Gordon fell, it was asked: 'Why is the weather forecaster at the Meteorological Office like the Mahdi?' The answer is inevitable: 'Because he is a false prophet.'

Shakespeare said that 'jesters do often prove prophets.' He might with propriety have affirmed the truth of the converse of this proposition, for prophets often prove jesters. This is especially true of wilful weather and sporting prophets. Every one sets up as a weather prophet, no matter how small his stock in trade may be. An old grumbler being informed that storm signals would in future be made by the firing of cannon, declared that the expense might well be disregarded, provided that each gun were loaded with a weather prophet. Virgil gave an account of the weather signs known to the ancients, and refers to frogs as aids in weather forecasting. It would appear that these croakers are still held in esteem for that purpose. A precocious urchin heard a frog croak. He informed a young lady that rain would surely fall within twenty-four hours, as the croaking of frogs was an infallible sign. His prediction was accepted in good faith; but beautiful weather prevailed during the period. The fair one took her mentor to task. Equal to the occasion, he replied: 'Oh, well, now, the frog lied; and I'm not responsible for his morality.'

A shepherd lad always predicted when umbrellas would be wanted. He had noticed that an old ram used to twitch his tail vigorously whenever rain threatened. An old Danish proverb says that 'Almanac-makers make the almanacs, but God makes the weather.' A once famous almanac compiler was caught in a shower foretold by a hostler of the inn whence he had set out. He returned wetter, hoping to be wiser. Having 'tipped' the hostler to discover his method, the seer was disconcerted by its simplicity. The illiterate informant owned one of his questioner's almanacs, and having found that the weather forecasts therein were radically wrong, he was wont to assume that the weather would be the opposite of that specified for any given day.

When we recall the variability of our weather, it seems improbable that predictions for long periods can ever be successful. Who could have

foretold twelve months in advance with any accuracy the cool summer of 1890 or that of 1888, when July weather seemed to have been borrowed from March? It was suggested that the exceptionally large number of icebergs in the North Atlantic was a cause of our cool summer. Where is the man who can reconcile that theory with the fact that September was warmer than for twenty years past?

DUMARESQ'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXXV.—UNEXPECTED.

A WEEK or two later, Cyrus Vanrenen sat one brilliant Algerian morning under the shade of the drooping pepper-tree at the Orangers, discussing with his sister Corona the pros and cons of a serious move he contemplated in the game of life. To the western American mind, indeed, few things on earth are really serious; but this was one of them. Not, to be sure, that the question of getting married, or of whom you chose for your accessory in the fact, could be regarded as in itself a particularly grave one; but when the person contemplated was so very high-toned as Psyche Dumaresq—well, Cyrus felt that to propose outright demanded some unwonted previous deliberation. So he discussed it long and he discussed it earnestly.

'I guess, Corona,' he said decisively at last, 'I'll plunge on it to-day. You must plunge once. After all, at the worst she can only say *no* to me. Come to think of it, that's one of the shortest words in the English language.'

'The question is, though,' Corona answered, very demure, 'if you waited a little longer mightn't she feel a bit more like making a *yes* of it?'

'Well, I don't know for that,' Cyrus answered after a moment's reflection, with philosophic calm. 'A man never knows what he can do till he tries. I've bossed a pork-ring, so I don't see why I need shrink into my shoes before a woman, anyhow. I may be presumptuous—she's so particularly high-toned—but I somehow feel as if she kind of liked me.'

'That sort of girl don't marry a man because she kind of likes him,' Corona answered with prompt decision. 'She marries only when she loves him like—like anything, Cyrus. But there ain't much harm in trying, anyway. It would be a pretty good thing for the family, say, if we could feel you were marrying Haviland Dumaresq's daughter.'

'It would,' her brother repeated with emphasis. 'Folks would admire at it in Cincinnati.'

So Cyrus made up his mind for the plunge, and only waited for the fitting opportunity.

Now, opportunity, as is well known, comes in time to him who seeks it. It came to Cyrus soon after lunch, when Psyche, groping her way into the garden, sat down by herself on the stone seat in a far corner. She sat and gazed at the deep blue sky she could not see, and listened to the hum of the invisible bees murmuring among the fruit-trees. The low buzz of insects was dear to her now. Sound had come to replace sight. A

certain quiet calm possessed her soul. It was the resignation of despair stealing graciously over her.

Presently Cyrus strolled up as if by accident and sat down quietly on the bench beside her. Psyche made room for him gladly. The good young American was so kind and nice, so thoughtful and attentive, she really liked him. He began to talk to her, as he seated himself by her side, in an unconcerned way, as if he meant nothing; mere everyday talk of a gossip sort about the people in the *pension*. 'You like Sirena,' he said at last, in a very pleased voice, in answer to something Psyche had remarked. 'And Corona too, I'm sure you like them. It's a very great pleasure to me to find you like Sirena.'

'I love them both dearly,' Psyche answered with warmth. 'Except Geraldine Maitland, I think, Mr Vanrenen, I never met anybody I liked so much. In a *pension* like this, one gets to know and understand people's characters so thoroughly, you see. Everywhere else you choose your intimates: here, you have companionship thrust upon you, willy nilly. And it seems to me, the more you know the nice people, the nicer they become; and the more you know the unpleasant ones, the more do their disagreeable traits grow upon you.'

'That's so,' Cyrus assented with a pleased smile. 'And our girls outlive the test pretty well, you think, Miss Dumaresq?'

'They need no test,' Psyche answered warmly. 'They're just charming. Sirena's a dear, and I loved her almost from the very first moment I ever saw her. I think that's generally the way with me. I suppose my instincts are quick, or something of that sort; but whoever I like, I like instinctively; and whoever I don't like, I don't like from the very beginning.'

Cyrus leaned forward with an eager bend. 'And which did you do with *me*, Miss Dumaresq?' he asked anxiously.

Psyche started. 'Why, Mr Vanrenen,' she said with transparent frankness, 'how on earth could anybody do anything but like you? I don't think it's possible to talk to you once without liking you ever so much. You're so good and true. I should think everybody always liked you.'

Cyrus's heart was in the seventh heavens. 'Thank you, Miss Dumaresq,' he said in a rather low and gentle voice. 'That means a great deal to me, I can tell you: a great deal more than you imagine, I'm certain. Indeed, there's something I want to say to you about that. Ever since you came here—'

He broke off short, for Psyche, anticipating what he was going to say, had risen from her seat with a little startled cry, and was groping her way back toward the *pension* in dismay. Cyrus's tone had told her all. It was dreadful, dreadful. This was something for which she was wholly unprepared. In her deep, deep sorrow, to have *this* thrust upon her! And by any one so kind and good as Cyrus! It grieved her to the quick that he should have blundered into so sad and hopeless a mistake. The Vanrenens' friendship had been very pleasant to her; the one bright spot in her desert of trouble; and now, this painful and unexpected contretemps would spoil all: she could never feel again as she had hitherto felt towards

them. She groped her way on, and made blindly for the door. Cyrus, all abashed, but watchful and kindly still, walked by her side, and guided her movements almost imperceptibly.

As she reached the door, she turned round to him, crimson, but very gently. 'Thank you, Mr Vanrenen,' she said in her soft sweet voice. 'I'm so much obliged to you for your silence and your help. You saw how I felt. That was more than kind of you.'

'And I mayn't say more?' Cyrus asked, half trembling.

'Not at present,' Psyche answered, hardly knowing what she said. 'You—you took me so much by surprise, you know.—I wasn't expecting it. Some day, perhaps, I'll tell—Sirena or Corona everything I feel. But not now. I can't bear it yet. Please go, Mr Vanrenen. There's Geraldine come to have her set at tennis with you.'

Cyrus, obedient as always, raised his hat, though he sorely wondered what Psyche meant. But these high-toned women are always so hard to understand. They don't say what they mean right out: they talk round and round things. Their feelings are more than a fellow can fathom. But you've got to accept them. You must take them on their own terms or give the pursuit up altogether. They won't be anything except themselves. So he turned on his heel, and descending to the tennis-court, took his seat quietly beside Geraldine Maitland.

As for poor Psyche, much moved and disturbed by this untoward event, she took refuge for a while, of set purpose, in the little salon; for if she had gone to her own room, she must have burst into tears and cried her eyes out. Her father was there, reading a book on the sofa; and Corona, too; she could just make out a vague blur for Corona. So she glided in, and sank into a seat. Haviland Dumaresq glanced up from his book as she entered and smiled approbation. She had made her way to her seat without much difficulty, and now she was gazing, by no means vacantly, around the room. He was sure by the intelligent look in her eyes that Psyche was really taking in and observing the various objects.

And so, in the excitement of the moment, she really was. To conceal her agitation, to hide her misery, she was looking about her with all her eyes at the things in the room. And what was more, she saw them—she saw them.

A newspaper lay on the centre table of the salon. Psyche could make it out quite distinctly as a dim white patch from the place where she sat on the low divan between the two arched Moorish windows. Partly to please Haviland Dumaresq, partly to hide her pain and distress, she made up her mind to try and read it. Her father was always urging her to read, and so was the doctor, and Sirena too, and Corona, and everybody. If only she would rouse herself, they said—one effort of will—all might yet begin to re-establish itself. Well, then, she would: she would do it to please them. With that firmness of purpose which ran in the very blood with her, an inheritance of character from Haviland Dumaresq, Psyche determined that, swim and dance as it might, she would make it out, she would read it. She would show them all she could at least try hard: she would not be beaten

by mere dead circumstance without at anyrate one more stern struggle.

After a moment's pause, she rose from her seat again, and groped her way across the room firmly. Corona saw her, and rising in concert, glided across to take her arm and lead her to the table. But Psyche waved the friendly aid aside with an imperious gesture. She wanted to do it all by herself. She stumbled across the vacant space to the table with doubtful feet, and took up the dim white patch in her trembling fingers. Her father watched her furtively above the top of his book. Looking hard at the title, and concentrating her gaze, she saw to her surprise that she could still make out the big print letters. It was the *Dépêches Algériennes*, and it was dated *Jeudi, 26 Février*. Pleased at her success, she turned back to the window, and seated herself once more on the low divan, where she tried to spell out the matter of the telegrams.

As she gazed at them vacantly, a word in the second column caught her eye on a sudden; a word that no longer swam or danced, but stared at her straight and hard in fast black letters; a word that she could have seen, she felt, if she were stone-blind; a word that burned itself then and there into her very brain.

A single English name!

The name Linnell, as clear as daylight.

She almost cried aloud with horror and surprise: horror, and a certain vague indefinite fascination.

She knew he was dead: it was the certainty of his death the paper announced. Some straggler from the Soudan must have brought to Algiers the terrible tidings. Better the certainty than suspense any longer.

For to Psyche, there was but one Linnell in the whole wide world. What to her were baronets or parsons or British officers? The name must needs be his, and nobody else's.

With a terrible effort, she restrained herself from calling out, she restrained herself from fainting. Cold as death, she concentrated her glance once more upon the paper.

Science was right. It needed but a strong exercise of will. As she focussed her eyes upon the dim white sheet, letter after letter came out distinctly, in blood-red tints, till she could make out the key-words of the sentence easily: they glared at her from the page like liquid fire: they were: 'Biskra'—'Linnell'—'Khartoum'—'Gordon'!

She bit her lip till the blood came, almost, and dug the nails of her clenched left hand deep into the palm to increase the stimulus. She was striving hard enough now in all conscience. Her father and the doctors could find no fault with her.

Slowly, slowly, those critical words blazed out more distinctly and plainer still. Line after line gradually arranged itself. The colours only seemed all gone wrong. They glowed so fiercely, like molten gold, she could hardly look at them. But she looked for all that: she looked and shuddered. And this was what she read, in telegraphic French, written as it seemed to her in crimson letters on a burning ground of fiery orange.

'Biskra, Feb. 24. Arabs from the oases announce to-day that a caravan now crossing the

desert convoys a survivor of Gordon's army at Khartoum, cut off by the Mahdi in the course of last winter. From the description given, it would appear that the fugitive is probably an Englishman, whose name the Arabs assert to be Sir Linnell. In effect, an officer of that name is known to have been missing after the fall of Khartoum. The caravan is expected to reach Biskra some time about the 6th proximo.

Psyche's strength held out till she had finished the telegram. Then she fell back on her seat, and swooned away suddenly.

A FRENCH CONVICT COLONY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC.

IN olden times Botany Bay, our British convict settlement, was considered to be about as distant a corner of the world as could well be found for the transportation of moral offenders. But France has found a still more distant place to serve as a national dust-bin, a receptacle for the refuse of French society. The traveller who would journey thither must first traverse half the globe to the farthest Australian port, and there trans-ship and begin another, though a much shorter, voyage to his destination.

It was a bright June morning when our boat steamed out of Sydney harbour into the great Pacific Ocean; though, by the way, there are times when the poor sea-sick passenger thinks that that ocean should have been called Terrific rather than Pacific. When about a thousand miles had been accomplished, all eyes were directed towards a lighthouse close on our right. The lower part of this useful edifice is a comfortable dwelling-house, and the tiny coral island upon which it is built is a garden of tropical verdure, and only a few miles from port. What a contrast between this nice little island home and other lighthouses that we have seen, on desolate, weather-beaten, out-of-the-world shores, where some poor fellows while away their days, months, or years almost or quite alone! The outline of mountainous land was visible ahead; and around us were several little coral islets in full view, with their lofty palm-trees standing up clear against the sky.

By-and-by the inner harbour is reached, and a town of considerable dimensions lies before us; this town is Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia. Round-topped hills and long ridges rise irregularly behind the town. Some of these are somewhat barren, and not unlike the mountains of Scotland after which the island was named; but among some of the gorges, valleys, and slopes there is a thick growth of tropical vegetation. On going ashore, the traveller is obliged to admit that, though he has travelled so far, he has not yet got outside of the pale of civilisation. Noumea has its grand square, surrounded and intersected by acacia avenues. Here the 'fashionable' of the town walk or sit or lounge while a dozen convict bandsmen discourse music inferior perhaps to nothing of the kind to be heard in the southern hemisphere. The population of Noumea is about three thousand. Frenchmen form a large proportion: but there are also Englishmen, Germans, Italians, and many South Sea islanders. The streets are narrow, and rather

'continental' in appearance. Names, signs, notices, &c., are of course in the French language. The houses are more open to public gaze and intrusion than one finds in any colony of home-loving Anglo-Saxons, even in a tropical climate; and the military and government officers hurrying through the streets, or standing at their posts of duty, have the dainty finish of dress and general appearance peculiar to Frenchmen. There are general stores at which you can buy anything from a pound of candles to a suit of clothes; and tailors, chemists, photographers, and booksellers display their goods in the windows. In some streets the courtyards and verandas are shaded and beautified by banana trees, ferns, and cocoa-nut palms. Along the shores skirting the harbour and up the hillside are some very pleasant residences. A fine Roman Catholic cathedral has just been built of stone, and a small French Protestant church is in course of erection. The roads into the country are excellent; and cabs and other carriages can be procured for pleasure-trips inland.

The chief feature, however, is the convict element. Gangs of men, clean-shaven and arrayed in drab uniform, march in order to and from their work every day. They are employed in making bricks, constructing roads, and in general public works. Their life is not a hard one if they behave themselves; but insubordination or attempts to escape often result in positively brutal treatment at the hands of European and native warders. As one gazes upon the faces of a gang of these men, the curious inquiry arises, what tales of misfortune and crime could these miserable fellows unfold? Is there a man among them innocent of the crime laid at his door? No doubt, it has been the lot of some to be dragged away from home and friends and all society, and doomed to spend many a weary year as a convict among convicts, without a hope of freedom again in this life—no doubt, this has occasionally happened to innocent men. Who but the Almighty knows the bitterness of such a life? It would not do of course to credit all that convicts have to say of themselves. As in Australia fifty years ago, so now in New Caledonia, the first thing the convict tells his interrogator is usually that the police took 'the wrong man.' A conspicuous notice is posted up informing visitors and all civilians that speaking to a convict or giving tobacco, newspapers, or the like renders the offender liable to arrest and imprisonment. Before we had spelled out this important notice, however, or even suspected its existence, we got into conversation with an intelligent young fellow who spoke English well. His story was—and there seemed to be an air of truthfulness about it—that he was quite innocent of the embezzlement with which he was charged, and for which he was transported. Indeed, his innocence had now, after four years, been proved, and 'a free pardon' was expected by the next mail. After penal servitude for a certain term, some are allowed complete freedom within the limits of New Caledonia; but any attempt to pass beyond these bounds brings upon the fugitive, if caught, harsh treatment probably for the rest of his life.

Attempts to get away to Australia by open boat—a distance of eight hundred miles—are

comparatively common. Many of these attempts are discovered before a start has been really made; and those who succeed in getting out of French waters do not all live to see land again. A few, however, every year manage to reach the Australian coast, and they fondly imagine that their dangers are all over when they have once set foot upon this free land; but even then these hopes are, perhaps oftener than not, doomed to disappointment. As a rule, they land on these shores penniless, half-starved, and probably able to speak only a few words of English. Under such circumstances, it is almost impossible to pass themselves off as anything else than escaped convicts from New Caledonia; and as the Australian police keep a very vigilant look-out for such characters, there is little chance of ultimate freedom. The people of Australia generally profess considerable alarm lest the influx of these French criminals should pollute Australian society. No doubt, a certain percentage of the few who reach our colonies would remain there and would resort to dishonest methods of living; but it is felt by many that our police exceed their duty when they hunt up men whose original offences were trivial, and who show a disposition to become honest citizens—when they arrest such men, just rejoicing in their new-found liberty, and hand them over to the tender mercies of French warders.

But let us turn again to the gang of convict labourers being marched through the streets of Noumea! We cannot read their histories in their faces; but we may rest assured of this, that many of them were missed from their native villages and streets in far-away France in such a manner that no one regretted their absence or bestowed as much as a passing tear upon their memory. But there are also young men who have mothers, wives, sisters, or brothers in the land of their birth, who mourn the disgrace and calamity of those who were once the mainstay and the pride of the home. It may be that they themselves, or some of them at least, suffer from remorse, now that they realise the wickedness and folly of their deeds.

Very recently an aged woman gathered money and strength and courage to journey to the other end of the world to carry out a scheme that she had devised for the escape of her son, who was a convict in New Caledonia. Inspired by a mother's love, she actually succeeded in reaching Noumea, where she lived for a time among the civilian population and managed to communicate with her son. By-and-by the screw steamer *Rockton* was about to start for Sydney, and this old woman was a passenger. Without exciting any suspicion whatever, she had succeeded in getting on board a large box very plainly marked 'This side up.' When the ship had actually cleared the wharf, a sailor, regardless of these instructions, turned the box upside down, and was at once attracted by some commotion inside. This was reported to an officer, who in turn called a policeman from the shore and had the steamer stopped. The box was of course examined, and it was found that the lid had hinges and a bolt inside, and the contents were an armful of straw, a bottle of water, several boiled eggs, and the convict son of the old woman. They had purchased a ticket to Sydney for him, and it was intended that he

should emerge from his hiding-place at night and take his place among the other passengers. Perhaps the ends of justice were met more fully by the return of this man to his bondage; but who can fail to feel sorry for the poor old mother, who, after such patient efforts to rescue her son, and having so nearly brought her clever plan to a successful issue, had to retrace her weary steps back to France with the knowledge that her son's lot had only been made harder by her endeavour to bring him home again.

The convicts, however, who suffer most in consequence of unsuccessful attempts to gain their liberty are those who run away into the bush, and are recaptured by native police, who are let out like bloodhounds to hunt the wretched runaway. A leading citizen of Noumea told me that he had himself witnessed disgraceful cruelties on such occasions. Every convict, I suppose, whether in Australia, or Siberia, or New Caledonia, learns the lesson that 'the way of transgressors is hard'; but it does not appear that the French authorities are on the whole less just or less kind in their treatment of criminals than British authorities are, or at least than they were to Botany Bay convicts a generation ago. Some influence has been brought to bear upon France, in the interests of our colonies, to induce her to stop the exportation of criminals to the South Pacific; but a great deal of money has been spent in preparing New Caledonia for the settlement of convicts; moreover, France is determined to extend rather than curtail her interests in that part of the world; and as her people are not good colonisers, the transportation system is considered to be the best method of peopling this southern land. When the convict has served his term of hard labour he has every opportunity of making a home for himself.

But we must return to Noumea. The stranger, especially if he be from a white-man's land, such as England, will be struck by the number and variety of dark-skinned people to be seen in the streets. Many of them are from the New Hebrides and the Loyalty Islands, whilst others are specimens of the aboriginal inhabitants of New Caledonia. These last-named people are much more of the negro type than are the Fijians, Samoans, or Tongans to the east of them, or even than the Australian blacks are. Their skins are sooty black, their hair black and woolly, and their features not quite so thick as those of African negroes. In their native haunts they go practically naked. In the streets of Noumea, however, they wear a kind of skirt from the waist to the knees, and in some cases a thin vest or jacket. The girls wear thin European dresses, hanging loosely about them. Large numbers of them, male and female, are employed as household servants, others are general labourers. Some are native police; and others, again, are prisoners, locked up by night and escorted to their work by day. A New Caledonian native house resembles the roof of a round wheat-rick, but only raised a few feet from the ground. They live in tribes, and were originally warlike and of cannibal propensities. Their conquerors have had some little trouble with them. A few years ago they rose in rebellion and massacred a number of European settlers and threatened Noumea itself. Now, however, they seem to be quite settled,

and European settlement is spreading all over the island.

A large portion of the southern end is almost worthless, but there are other districts in which plantations and cattle stations thrive. The mineral resources also are being developed, and there is every prospect of a steady increase of European capital and population. Roads and telegraph wires extend the whole length of the island (two hundred miles). The scenery in some parts is exceedingly fine. Palms, acacias, ferns, bamboos, and tall grasses grow luxuriantly; and the red and yellow flowers of the hibiscus tree, together with brilliant flowers of creeping plants, add brightness to the novelty and richness of the tropical forests. The mountains run up to six thousand feet above sea-level, and their summits, slopes, and gorges, with the intervening valleys, form very grand landscapes.

In New Caledonia the French have a valuable possession. It is to be hoped that their administration will be just and humane as regards the native tribes that come under their rule, and that they will so use their power in the South Pacific as not to become offensive to England, whose claims and interests in those regions are so much greater.

THE HEIR OF ROTHWELL CHASE.

CHAPTER II.

FANNY DALE raced up the thickly-carpeted stairs which led to the upper floor as she had never raced before, and burst into Therese's room, the door of which had by this time been unlocked. Mrs Marchmont's maid had put away her French novel and resumed her ordinary attire. At the moment of Fanny's entrance she was arranging her hair in front of the glass. She turned in the act of thrusting a long pin through one of the coils, and regarded the panting, frightened girl with coldly-questioning eyes.

'O mamzelle—the child—Master Frank—he's missing!' blurted out Fanny.

'Missing! What do you mean by missing?'

'He's gone—I can't find him anywhere. When I left the nursery to take missis her tea, he was playing quietly among his toys; but when I got back he was gone and the window was wide open. Oh! what can have become of him?—You—you haven't seen anything of him, have you?'

'Nothing whatever. How should I? As you must know, he would never come here of his own accord.'

Fanny knew that quite well. To her mistress Therese might pretend to be as attached to the youthful heir as Fanny was in reality; but the latter knew how hollow was the pretence, and that Therese disliked all children without exception.

'Perhaps he has shut himself in one of the empty rooms on purpose to frighten me,' went on the girl. 'Oh, do come with me, mamzelle, and help me to look for him!'

'Certainly I will, Fanny. You may depend on it, the little imp is only playing you a trick.'

Then, after a moment's thought, she added: 'But you say the window was open when you got back. That looks strange, very strange.'

Fanny began to whimper. The other gripped her by the arm. 'Don't make a fool of yourself,' she said; 'at least, not till you have made sure that there is nothing else left you to do.—*Venez!*'

They went quickly down-stairs together; and Therese taking the lead, began at once a systematic search of the rooms, of which the nursery formed one, on the floor below. They were chiefly spare bedchambers, none of which, except on rare occasions, had been occupied for years. The bedrooms used by the family opened out of a corridor reached by another staircase on the opposite side of the entrance-hall, or otherwise through the picture-gallery, into which latter apartment, in the faint hope of finding the missing child there, Therese and Fanny now ventured, but, of course, to no avail. The door at the opposite end of the gallery, which gave access to the other wing of the house, being locked, was sufficient proof that Master Frank could not have made his way into the rooms beyond. There now remained only the small drawing-room; but, as Fanny said, how could the child possibly be there, when it was from that room she herself had gone direct to the nursery after her second journey below stairs?

It was to the nursery that Therese and her white-faced companion now mechanically bent their steps; their search had not occupied longer than six or seven minutes in all. The nursery was just as Fanny had last left it, the toys scattered about the floor, and the window wide open, except that by this time the room was nearly in darkness. The first thing that Therese did was to light the candles in the girandoles over the chimney-piece, then turning to the girl, she said: 'But one thing remains to be done, and that is, to tell Mrs Marchmont.'

At these words, Fanny dropped on her knees and broke into a tempest of hysterical sobs and tears. 'I daren't tell her—I daren't tell her,' she exclaimed. 'Oh! what shall I do?'

'If you dare not tell her, I must,' replied the Swiss without the slightest change in the low, even inflections of her voice.

'Oh, if you only would!' moaned the girl through her sobs.

For a moment or two Therese stood regarding the crouching figure before her with a stare of chilly contempt. In her eyes, half-veiled by their white lashes, was the glitter of a malignant triumph. Without a word more she quitted the room, and traversing the corridor with the noiseless stealthy tread of some soft-footed pre-daceous creature, she tapped lightly at the door of the small drawing-room; and then, after a moment's pause, during which a film, so to speak, gathered over her eyes and robbed them of all expression, she turned the handle and went in.

Strong woman though she was, Mrs Marchmont seemed to reel under the shock of Therese's news, briefly and clearly told by the waiting-woman. She pressed her hand to her side and for a moment or two was powerless to speak. Her first words were an order to Therese to summon Sir Harry, who was engaged with his

steward in the library. Then, accompanied by Miss Fenton, who was scarcely less shocked than she, Mrs Marchmont hurried to the nursery, where Sir Harry made his appearance two minutes later. Fanny Dale, a limp, grovelling figure, was powerless, in the utter abandonment of her despair, to answer any questions coherently. The baronet, to whom her moans and bewailings were irritating in the extreme, sternly ordered her to her own room, and then turned to the composed Therese for the particulars he had failed to elicit from the nursemaid. Three minutes sufficed to put him in possession of all there was to tell.

'It's a pity—it is a thousand pities,' he said, when Therese had come to an end, 'that so much time has been wasted in searching the other rooms, when it is self-evident that the child has been carried off by some miscreant by way of the window. You ought to have summoned me immediately the boy was missed. However, no more time must be lost. This room must be left exactly as it is till the arrival of the police.—You, my dear,' turning to Mrs Marchmont, 'had better go back to the drawing-room; and Edeline will keep you company.' He spoke very quietly and collectedly. It was only by the spasmodic opening and shutting of his hands that he betrayed how deeply he was affected by the mysterious disappearance of his grandson and heir. With that Sir Harry went his way, and the two women returned slowly and sadly to the drawing-room. Therese, finding she was not wanted further at present, had already vanished.

Five minutes later, Tom Abrey, the groom, was spinning along in the dogcart on his way to Berriemfield to summon the police, while in the huge flagged kitchen were already assembled the gardener and his assistant; the coachman and two stable helps; the butler, who quivered like a blanc-mange in human shape; a couple of stalwart but overfed footmen; the gamekeeper and his underling; Dickon, the half-witted man-of-all-work; and lastly, Sir Harry, with Mr Warde, the lame land-steward. (After Lady Marchmont's death, the establishment at the Chase had been considerably cut down.) The baronet's questions with the view of ascertaining whether any suspicious characters had been seen loitering about the house or grounds having failed to elicit any information, the little company was divided into three parties, Sir Harry taking charge of one of them, the gamekeeper of another, and the gardener of the third. Each party took lanterns, and each man was armed with a stout cudgel, of which the gamekeeper had an ample supply in stock. Then, after a few final instructions, they all filed quietly out by way of the back entrance, watched from a distance by the women portion of the below-stairs establishment, behind whom, silent but observant, stood Therese Cobran. As soon as the door was shut behind the last man, Therese turned and went slowly up-stairs without speaking to any one, a faint amused smile flickering round her thin lips; but it was not a pleasant smile by any means. 'Poor Sir Harry!' she remarked to herself with a shrug. 'I am afraid that he and his men will come back no wiser than they went.'

In the small drawing-room sat Mrs Marchmont and Miss Fenton, one on each side of the fireplace, waiting and listening for the tidings which any moment might bring. They spoke but little to each other. Edeline, who had dearly loved the lost boy, and had made far more of a pet of him than his mother had ever condescended or cared to do, would fain have sympathised with Mrs Marchmont had she been permitted to do so; but such timid overtures as she ventured on were so coldly received by the widow that her feelings shrank within themselves, as the petals of a delicate plant shrink and shrivel before the first breath of frost. Mrs Marchmont was one of those women who are sufficient unto themselves, who, how heavy soever may be the burdens they are called upon to bear, not merely scorn to crave the sympathy of others, but repel it even when offered unasked.

And yet, deep rooted in Mrs Marchmont's heart was a passionate love for her child; but even to the object of that love her betrayals of tenderness—her moments of weakness she termed them to herself—were brief and infrequent. For the ordinary fond and foolish mother whose happiest hours are those she spends among her darlings, she had nothing but a feeling of quiet contempt. They were poor invertebrate creatures, with whom she was glad to feel that she had nothing in common. Frank had a child's intuitive consciousness that his mother loved him; but her caresses were matters of such rare occurrence that he almost shrank from them. In point of fact, his love for his beautiful and stately mamma was over-weighted with a sort of awe—not fear, be it understood—so that it was always a relief to him when the drawing-room ordeal was at an end and he was at liberty to race back to the nursery, where laughing, sweet-tempered Fanny Dale more than made up to him for whatever he lacked in the way of caresses elsewhere.

The Chase was so large and some parts of it were so far removed from the domestic offices, that our two ladies were unaware of the return of the search-party till Sir Harry in person opened the drawing-room door and walked in. Both of them started to their feet at his entry; but his face told the news he brought before his tongue could frame a syllable. It seemed to Edeline that he looked five years older than he had looked at luncheon a few hours before. He sank into a chair with a groan.

'You have not found him!' said the mother with a constriction of the throat which all but choked back her words.

The old man shook his head dolefully. 'No, we have not found him,' he answered hoarsely. For a few moments he was powerless to say more.

A deep sigh that was almost a sob broke from Mrs Marchmont, and then she sank into her chair again. Edeline's heart went out towards her, but encountered no responsive chord. The widow's face might have been nothing but a beautiful mask for aught it betrayed of whatever feelings and emotions were at work below.

Presently the baronet cleared his voice. 'Every square yard of the gardens and shrubberies has been searched,' he said, 'and the park

itself thoroughly examined, but to no purpose. Yardley, the superintendent of police, has just arrived with two of his men, and I am now going to consult with him as to the next steps it behoves us to take.'

That night was one which the inmates of Rothwell Chase were little likely ever to forget. Although the telegraph had been set to work and the country was being scoured in every direction by the mounted constabulary, hour passed after hour without bringing tidings of any kind. It was long after midnight before the household separated. Mr Warde had kindly offered to remain up all night in case of the arrival of any news, which he would at once communicate to his employer; and his offer had been accepted. It was with a heavy heart that the baronet kissed his daughter-in-law and bade her good-night. At the foot of the stairs Edeline offered him her arm without a word, and without a word he took it. Never had he felt the need of help as he felt it to-night; never had the burden of his years seemed to weigh so heavily on him before.

Therese, who seemed to have quite got over her temporary indisposition, was waiting for her mistress when the latter reached her dressing-room. She was much too astute a person, and read her mistress too thoroughly, to venture on any spoken expression of sympathy. To have done so, as she was well aware, would have merely resulted in a snubbing. But sympathy may be conveyed by manner, by an inflection of the voice even, and, more subtly still, by an indefinable something in the mere act of administering to the needs of those whom it is our privilege to serve in a subordinate capacity. And after such a fashion it was that Therese strove to convey her sympathy. It is to be presumed that she was successful in her efforts, seeing that Mrs Marchmont's last words as she quitted her for the night were: 'You are a good creature, Therese.'

Therese paused outside the door and laughed a low sardonic laugh. 'I'm a good creature, am I, madame? To hear you talk, one might take you for a duchess born, instead of for what you are—the daughter of a wandering fiddle-scraper. But it may be that you will have occasion to change your opinion before you and I have done with each other.'

Next morning, while the family were at breakfast—such a breakfast as they could eat—Inspector Dimwade from Scotland Yard was announced. Superintendent Yardley had met him at the station, and they had driven over together to the Chase, the inspector being put into possession of the facts of the case *en route*. It may be here remarked that, so far, the efforts of the police had been productive of no result.

Inspector Dimwade was a man of five-and-forty, or thereabouts, with a florid complexion and a somewhat full habit of body, sandy hair and short side whiskers to match. He had a pleasant smile and a quietly plausible manner, which he found of great service to him in his profession.

When the consultation with Sir Harry had come to an end, which it did in the course of a few minutes, Inspector Dimwade asked to be conducted to the nursery. On entering the room he walked at once to the window and submitted

it to a close examination, fastening and unfastening the hasp several times, and then with his eye measuring the height of the balcony from the ground. Then he instructed Yardley to shut the window while he remained outside. This being done, he proved, by means of the blade of his pocket-knife, what an easy thing it was for any one to force open the hasp of the window.

'You have certainly scored a point there, Mr Inspector,' said the baronet as Dimwade re-entered the room through the window he had so readily opened. 'But before a man could do what you have just done, he must get into the balcony from below, and how, pray, would he manage that?'

'Pardon me, Sir Harry; I have not implied that the nursery was entered from the balcony. I merely wanted to satisfy myself that it could have been. I think I understood you to say when we were in the library that there are several unoccupied bedrooms on this floor which are rarely entered by any one but the chambermaid whose duty it is to keep them in order.'

'That is so,' responded Sir Harry.

'As a matter of course, such a house as the Chase must have a number of doors. To begin with, there is the main entrance; then there is the side-door through which Mr Yardley and I were admitted; I noticed, too, a door in the conservatory; and doubtless there are one or more entrances by way of the back premises.'

The baronet nodded assent.

'Such being the case, would there, in your opinion, sir, be any insuperable difficulty, supposing a person to be wishful of so doing, more especially if he happened to have a ready-made acquaintance with the run of the house, in stealing into it unobserved, hiding in one of the unused rooms, watching his opportunity, and the moment the girl's back was turned, making his way into the nursery, flinging (let us assume) a cloth over the child's head so as to smother its cries, opening the window, dropping from the balcony to the ground—the height, even when burdened with the child, would be a trifle to an active man—and then, aided by the dusk, making off through the shrubbery, it may be to some rendezvous previously agreed on with his accomplices, supposing him to have had any: would there be anything out of the range of probability in all this?'

Sir Harry gasped a little. Dimwade's way of stating his supposititious case was such that the baronet seemed to see the whole affair pass like a panorama before his eyes. 'As you state the case, there seems to me nothing whatever out of the range of probability,' he murmured. 'Indeed, quite the contrary, were it not for one thing: what possible motive could any one have for acting as you have suggested?'

Dimwade showed his teeth. 'Motives are very queer things, sir, and very hard to get at. Just now, I am concerned more with the method than the motives of the abduction; but we shall probably have to consider that part of the question later on.' Then, a moment later: 'By the way, have the unused bedrooms been searched for any traces of a possible intruder?'

'Not so far as I am aware,' answered Yardley.

'Suppose we throw an eye over them, now we are on the spot,' suggested Dimwade.

Accordingly, not one eye, but six were brought to bear on the rooms in question, but without being productive of the slightest result.

'Now, as to the ground below the balcony,' said the detective; 'has it been examined for traces of footsteps, or any other marks which would tend to prove it was by that way the child was carried off?'

'That was a point which I did not overlook,' replied the superintendent; 'but I thought it best to leave the examination till we could have daylight to help us.'

'Quite right. Suppose we go and examine the ground at once.'

'Yes,' said Inspector Dimwade a few minutes later, 'these are undoubtedly heel-marks, and the assumption is that they were made by the rascal when he let himself drop from the balcony with the child in his arms.'

He had gone down on one knee, and was examining certain dints in the gravelled drive which would hardly have been discernible had they not been sought for by the aid of a small but powerful magnifying glass.

'Now, if this surface,' he went on, 'instead of being hard gravel, had been turf or garden mould, it might possibly have furnished us with an important link in the chain of evidence; that is to say, we might not improbably have been able to find a pair of boots or shoes which would have exactly fitted the impressions. As it is, however, I am afraid the marks will prove of no service to us, for, although they are palpably here, yet they are little more than surface scratches, and might have been caused by one pair of boots just as readily as by another.' He rose and put away his glass. 'From this point, I presume, the fellow would have little or no difficulty in making his way out of the park?'

'None whatever,' answered the baronet. 'There is a public right-of-way across the lower end of the park which is open night and day to anybody who may choose to make use of it.'

WILD CATTLE.

THERE was a time in the annals of Britain when the greater part of the country was covered with forests, wild, sombre, and impenetrable, which gave shelter and sustenance to such *feræ naturæ* as the bear, the boar, the wolf, and the wild cattle of which we propose to speak here. One of these forests extended with hardly a gap as far as the English Apennines extend—that is, from Staffordshire to the Cheviots; and spread out on either side of the 'backbone' of England over the greater portion of what is now North Derbyshire, Lancashire, and Yorkshire, Cumberland, Westmorland, and Northumberland, to the debatable ground of the Border, where the Caledonian Forest began, and stretched northwards for eighty miles more. Towards the south much the same state of things existed, though the forests there were not so thick or extensive as those farther north; and man's footsteps were confined for the most part to the seacoast, from which ultimately the path of civilisation and the collateral path of devastation widened as fresh conquerors came in and drove their predecessors inland.

Here and there a town appeared in the interior, in some place fitted by nature or formed by man under the exigencies of circumstance; a rough road was made thither, and for a radius of a few miles round there might be a clearing. But beyond this radius the primeval forest raised its forbidding front again, and man stopped short, save when he made excursions a little way in, to procure for himself and his household a change of meat. This state of things existed not only in prehistoric, but in some places down to comparatively late historic times. When Matthew Paris was alive, thick woods extended from the edge of Ciltria (Chiltern) over places which are now populous and respectable London suburbs, nearly up to the very city itself, and were inhabited by 'numerous and various beasts, wolves, bears, forest bulls, and stags.'

It was especially so in the midland and northern parts, and it is in these parts that we find the latest and most frequent trace of the presence of wild animals—boars, wolves, and cattle. The region was not opened up and cultivated until some centuries later than the south; hence hearsay mention of the different species by temeritous and fortuitous travellers, and authentic mention of them in the late records of families situated in the midst of and owning the peculiar haunts of the creatures. But in time, the north underwent the same process of cultivation as had transformed the other part of the country from a sombre and sublime to a smiling and beautiful landscape. Forests were cut down without scruple, and at most only a few hundred acres out of many miles' extent were fenced around for the preservation of deer and cattle; wolves and boars having by this time become an unmitigated and dangerous nuisance, and having man's hand unanimously raised against them in consequence.

Deer still flourish because they are, or are regarded as being, very valuable. But the wild white cattle are slowly but surely following the other forest-rangers, the process of extermination in their case being aided by interbreeding, by the ravages of the foot-and-mouth disease, by accidental poisoning, and by the ferocity of the animals themselves. At the present day there are only four or five parks in all Britain where they are to be seen; and it will afford some idea of the rate at which they are dying out when it is stated that during this century alone, Gisborne Park in Yorkshire, Middleton Park and Whalley Abbey in Lancashire, Wollaton Park in Nottinghamshire, Leigh Court in Somersetshire, and perhaps half-a-dozen Scottish estates, have become depopulated of them.

Wild cattle are distinguished from our ordinary domestic breeds as well by the fact that they are wild as by the additional fact that they are pure white in colour, with the extremities—the tips of the horns, the feet, and the ears—either black or reddish brown. Much learned and ingenious—though somewhat superfluous—speculation has been offered to solve the mystery of their origin, and their presence in an alien land amid alien surroundings. Did the Romans import them? Manifestly not, for Cæsar was a Roman, and he expresses surprise at the great size of the *uri* he met with. As a rule, settlers in a new country, provided that country be not very remote,

carry some of their own sheep and cattle with them; and it has been asserted that one or other of the early bands of rovers who touched and settled upon our eastern shores imported the wild white cattle. But against this it is to be objected that their herds must of necessity have been tame; and the assumption that they did import the white oxen is only useful as serving to explain the origin in this country of certain domesticated varieties known to have existed, but now merged in other and differently-coloured varieties.

There is another and even more radical objection. Rüttimeyer has shown—and has been followed by Darwin, Lyell, Boyd Dawkins, and others—that the so-called *uri* are descended from the gigantic *Bos primigenius*, one of the four species to which all our European varieties owe their existence; and the bones of this animal have been found in our country dating from the Palæolithic age. So that if any bold adventurers did carry them across from the Continent, it must have been at a very remote period indeed.

Other descendants of the same large animal are found in many parts of Europe nowadays, notably in Hungary and on the Russian steppes; yet others are known to have existed in Friesland, Holstein, and elsewhere; and the most reasonable supposition seems to us to be that the *urus*—which was once very plentiful—spread all over Europe at the time when there was no such thing as a German Ocean, and when Britain was part of the Continent. Darwin said it was extremely doubtful whether he was white, and based his conclusion upon the tendency there is among wild or escaped cattle to become white with coloured ears, and upon the occasional appearance of dark-coloured calves among the existing or recently extirpated British herds. But may not this last fact be accounted for on the supposition of a cross? And was not the parental stock absolutely wild? The majority of scientists have adopted the conclusion which seemed to Darwin to be 'extremely doubtful'; but the question is hardly worth pursuing in the present connection. As for the undoubted deterioration in size, that may be attributed to a variety of causes, among others, to less favourable conditions of life and to the close interbreeding of which mention has been made.

The decrease may in the course of the centuries have been prodigious; but the wild cattle of Chillingham Park, in Northumberland, are magnificent creatures nevertheless—so magnificent in all points, that few of our domestic breeds can be said to rival them. The park, extending over eleven hundred acres, is of very ancient enclosure. Mention is made of the 'grete woode' of Chillingham in a document dating from the year 1220; and it is certain that in this century at the latest, the original extent of fifteen hundred acres was emarked, and the cattle driven in, as at Cadzow Castle in Lanarkshire, Naworth on the Border, and Drumlanrig in Dumfriesshire, from the circumjacent Caledonian Forest.

They present all the characteristics of animals found in a state of nature, save in being more delicate and slight in the bone than the latter—a result due to the causes which have affected the creatures' size. They are splendidly shaped—short in the leg, straight in the back and belly

lines, with thin skin, and with horns elegantly curved and of very fine texture. They have a peculiar cry—'more like that of a wild beast than that of ordinary cattle,' said the late Lord Tankerville, their owner; and they hide their young, feed at night, and bask or sleep during the day.

They are timorous and at the same time pugnacious—that is to say, they will usually move off at the sight of any one even at a distance; but will sometimes become aggressive, especially if there is a menacing look in the stranger's eye. And if attacked, they will turn and become dangerous assailants. This is in summer, when their blood is hot; in winter, when it is cooler, and when food is scarce in the upper park, they are more tractable and tame. At this season they 'will let you come among them, particularly if on horseback.' When migrating to the lower park at certain intervals, they move in single file, the bulls leading. When returning, they move in the same manner, like a regiment of cavalry; but in this instance the bulls bring up the rear. If seized with a sudden panic, they gallop off pell-mell, but have a peculiar faculty, observable in red-deer also, of taking advantage of the irregularities of the ground, by which means they may traverse the park and yet hardly give you a sight of them.

'No sight could be more beautiful than they were when we saw them retreating in regular order into their forest sanctuary,' says Mr Hindmarsh, in his exhaustive account of them contained in the second volume of the *Annals of Natural History*. 'Their perfect symmetry, pure white colour, and fine crescent horns, render them when moving in a body a very imposing object. The eyes, eyelashes, [hoofs], and tips of the horns alone are black; the muzzle is brown, the inside of the ears red or brown, and all the rest of the animal white. Even the bulls have no manes, but only a little coarse hair upon the neck; and they fight for supremacy until a few of the most powerful subdue the others, who submit to the rule of superior physical strength. If by accident a bull gets separated from the herd for a day or two, his settled relation seems to be forgotten, for on his rejoining it, a fight ensues, and the conflict continues until the previous amicable understanding is re-established. The cows generally commence breeding at three, and continue to breed for a few years. When they calve, they hide their young for a week or ten days, and repair to the place of concealment two or three times a day for the purpose of suckling them. Should any person happen to approach their hiding-place, the calves clap their heads close to the ground and lie in form like a hare. They bear the winter well. They are seldom allowed to live more than eight or nine years, at which period they begin to go back. When slaughtered, the steers are usually six years old, and weigh about five hundred-weight, or forty stone.' The clean carcase of one bull, however, shot in 1826 by Earl Clanwilliam, weighed fifty-six stone; and the meat is always excellent—far more tender and juicy than that of the common cow. When Mr Hindmarsh paid his visit to the park the herd numbered eighty, of which forty were cows, twenty-five bulls, and fifteen steers of various ages. In

1861 they had dwindled down to about fifty; but increased by October 1874 to seventy-one. Six years later there were fifty-nine only, and at the present time the total is sixty-nine.

The Lyme Park herd, which has very recently become exterminated, differed from that of Chillingham in some important respects. They were larger—they were, in fact, the largest breed of cattle in the country; the coloured parts, with the exception of the hoofs, were generally red, though sometimes they were found approximating to blue-black or coal-black; and they were very hairy, having curly and luxuriant mane-like locks on the head and forequarters. Their hide, again, was of immense thickness; and they had much flesh about the neck and dewlap. They were very long in the body, high in the leg, and strong of bone, and possessed of 'a peculiar majestic stateliness,' as Mr Harting puts it. The park is situated in Cheshire, seven miles north of Macclesfield, and was at one time comprised within the forest of this name, whence the cattle were doubtless driven in when Richard II. granted the estate to Sir Piers Legh for his services at Cressy.

An attempt was made some years ago to reinvigorate the type by crossing it with the Gisburne cattle, but without conspicuous success. The late Rev. John Storer, in his *Wild White Cattle of Great Britain*, says 'the horns are of an intermediate character between those of the Chillingham and Chartley breeds—larger, not so upright, nor so nearly resembling in their mode of growth the horns of the Devon or Welsh breeds as is the case with the Chillinghams, but smoother, somewhat more upright in their growth, and less like the horns of the old Long-horns than is the case with the Chartley cattle.' In habits they were similar to the herd already described. They were timid, but dangerous if assailed. The cows were especially ferocious, and it is said that the poachers took uncommon care not to run into them.

The Chartley herd is not so wild. The park in Staffordshire where they are confined—and which once formed part of the Forest of Needwood—abuts on one side on to a public road, from which only a pale fence separates it; and in this way the cattle have become habituated to the sight of man. They are white, with black muzzles and hoofs, and a suggestion of black also upon the front part of the fetlock of all four legs. In some of them, black blotches appear on the neck, and occasionally a calf wholly black is born, and forthwith destroyed, because the circumstance is supposed to be an augury of ill for the house of Ferrers; or because it is desired to keep the breed as pure and uniform as possible.

The pasture upon which they feed is not good; it is wild and open, with little timber, and scanty and inferior herbage; yet the cattle thrive and look marvellously well. They also are very straight in the back and belly lines, deep in the body, and short in the leg. The hindquarters are slighter than the fore, as is the case with all wild animals, but are of considerable strength, nevertheless; and 'the flesh is carried well downwards towards the hock.' The head is 'elegant in the cow, masculine in the bull, "kind" in the steer,' with a topknot of long white hair, and is set off by extending, slight, and gracefully-

curved horns; the lock of hair, which gives the creature a demure expression, being a peculiarity held in common between this and the Somerford Park herd. The last named, located in Cheshire, a few miles from Congleton, are domesticated and harmless, but are not pure white. The possessor does not encourage this colour; the breed shows a strong tendency to produce small black spots on the neck, sides, and legs—to become speckled, in fact.

Where they came from and how they became domesticated are matters concerning which nothing is known. Sir Charles Shakerley in response to inquiries, said: 'We have no history of how they came or how long they have been here. I am of the third generation which has known nothing about them. The tradition is that they have been here two hundred years'—which is all very unsatisfactory, as a resolution of the matter would be interesting. Possibly they—or rather their ancestors—roamed wild in the forests, and they have become tame after having intercourse with man. Or possibly, again, they have been derived from some ancient monastery, of which at one time there were plenty in the neighbourhood, and where they could come under the refining and humanising influence of the monks.

Mr Harting's suggestion, which is worthy of consideration, is that, as they are of the same race as those at Middleton Park, in Lancashire, they may have come originally from Shakerley, only a few miles distant from Middleton and Blakeley.

The Scottish herds still in existence are two, and are preserved at Kilmory House, Argyllshire, and Hamilton or Cadzow Castle, Lanarkshire. The first is semi-wild, in colour white with black points, and having the ears, muzzles, and hoofs black. They are descended from the cattle which flourished over fifty years ago at Blair Athole, Perthshire, and which were sold to the Marquis of Breadalbane and to the Duke of Buccleuch. The Hamilton herd has peopled Cadzow Park from time immemorial. Robert Bruce hunted the wild bull here in 1320; and several succeeding—and who knows how many preceding—kings enjoyed the same pastime. The animals are not white, like the Chillingham beasts, with which they may be supposed to have most in common, but are rather dun white, with the muzzle, hoofs, and the inside of the ear black, and the forepart of the leg from the knee downwards mottled with black.

Sir Walter Scott has celebrated them in his ballad of *Cadzow Castle*:

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase
That roam in woody Caledon,
Crashing the forest in his race,
The mountain bull comes thundering on.

Fierce on the hunter's quivered hand
He rolls his eye of swarthy glow,
Spurns with black hoof and horn the sand,
And tosses high his mane of snow.

An excellent fanciful description, and quite worthy of the wizard who penned it. Only it happens that the Cadzow cattle have not got manes; their hair is short and curly. Scott falls into another error when he says they were extirpated for their ferocity about the year 1769; for

they still survive, and increase and multiply more rapidly and more surely than any other variety in the kingdom. They are so healthy perhaps because they have been crossed with good breeds in Cromwell's day and still more recently. Probably the Chillingham herd has also been crossed, although such a suggestion is scouted by the owner, whose boast it is that his cattle have been preserved pure ever since their enclosure. But most of the herds which have died out have gone that road because continuous interbreeding made them infertile, and the Northumbrian herd would doubtless have followed suit but for such an unrecorded admixture of other blood as has been supposed. In point of fact, and in conclusion, it is only by crossing that any of the few herds now remaining can continue to flourish; and even then, they are bound to lose their individual characteristics; so that the race—as wild cattle preserving the traditions of the *Bos primigenius*—must inevitably disappear at no very distant time.

A MARRIAGE MADE IN HEAVEN.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAP. I.

In the backwoods of Canada, about eighty miles north of Lake Ontario, there is a chain of three lakes, linked by the stream of a rapid river, which leads southward from the heart of a great forest. The last of the three lakes is broad and has but a slow current, because of a huge dam which the early Scottish settlers built across its mouth in order to form a basin to receive the lumber floated down from the lakes above. Hence this last lake is called Haven, which is also the name of the settlement at the side of the dam; for the worthy Scotsmen, having set up a large sawmill, built a church beside it, and by degrees a town and a school-house. All the wealth of the town comes from the forest; and the half-breed Indian lumber-men, toiling anxiously to bring their huge tree-trunks through the twisting rapids, connect all pleasant thoughts in their minds with the peaceful Haven Lake and the little town where they receive their wages. They are simple men for the most part; and, perhaps because they have received their first ideas of civilised religion and of the comforts of a good harbour at the same place, their tripping tongues to this day call it, not 'Haven,' but 'Heaven.'

As for the town, it throve apace in its early days, and there was no one in it who thrived better than Mr Reid, who kept the general shop. He was a cheerful soul; and it was perhaps owing more to his wife's efforts than his own that his fortune was made, for she kept more closely to the shop and had a sharper eye for the pence.

Mrs Reid was not cheerful; she was rather of an acrid disposition; and people said that there was only one subject on which the shop-keeper and his wife agreed, and that was as to the superiority of their daughter in beauty, talent, and amiability, over all other young women far or near. In their broad Scotch

fashion they called this daughter Eelen, and the town knew her as 'Bonnie Eelen Reid;' for every one acknowledged her charms, although there might be some who would not acknowledge her pre-eminence.

Mr and Mrs Reid carried their pride in their daughter to a great extent, for they actually sent her to boarding-school in the town of Coburgh, which was quite two days' journey to the south. When she finally came back from this educating process well grown, healthy, handsome, and, in their eyes, highly accomplished, the parents felt that there was no rank in the Canadian world beyond their daughter's reach, if it should be her pleasure to attain it.

'It wouldn't be anything out of the way even,' chuckled the happy Mr Reid, 'if our Eelen should marry the Governor-general.'

'Tuts, father, Governors!' said his wife scornfully, not because she had any inherent objection to Governors as sons-in-law in a general way, but because she usually cried down what other people said.

'The chief difficulty would be that they are usually married before they come to this country—aren't they, father?' said Eelen with a twinkling smile.

She did not choose to explain to any one what she really thought; she had fancies of her own, this pretty backwoods maiden.

'Well, well, there are lads enough in town, and I'll warrant she'll pick and choose,' said the jolly father in a resigned tone. He was not particular as to a Governor, after all.

That conversation happened when Eelen first came home; but a year or two after, the family conferences took a more serious tone. She had learnt to keep her father's books in the shop, and had become deft at housework; but there was no prospect of her settling in a house of her own, for many of the best young men in the place had offered themselves as lovers and been refused.

'Oh! what's the use o' talking, father,' cried Mrs Reid; 'if the girl won't, she won't, and that's all.—But I can tell *you*, Eelen Reid, that all your looks and your manners won't save you from being an old maid, if you turn your back on the men.'

'I wasn't talking,' said Mr Reid humbly; 'I was only saying to the lassie that I didn't want her to hurry; but I'd be right sorry when I'm getting old not to have some notion where I was going to leave my money—it'll more than last out Eelen's day, if it's rightly taken care of.'

'But I can't marry unless I should fall in love, father dear,' said Eelen wistfully.

Life was by no means dull in the little town. There were picnics in summer, sleigh-drives in winter, balls, and what not; and Eelen was no recluse. Still, she loved the place better than the people, and there was not a spot of ground in the neighbourhood that she did not know by heart.

In summer, the sparkling water of the lake rippled under a burning sun, and the thousand tree-stems left floating in it, held near to the edge of the floating boom of logs, became hot and dry on the upper side, while the green water-moss caught them from beneath. It was great

fun for the school children to scamper out daringly on these floating fields of lumber; and Eelen liked to go with them, and sometimes walk far out alone along the edge of the boom. She would listen to the birds singing, the children shouting, to the whir of the saws in the mill, and the splash of the river falling over the dam; and she would feel that it was enough delight simply to live without distressing herself about marriage yet awhile.

When winter came, Eelen was happier still. All the roughness and darkness of the earth was lost in a downy ocean of snow. Where the waterfall had been, there was a fairy palace of icicles glancing in the sun, and smooth white roads were made across the frozen lake. Eelen never drew back dazzled from the glittering landscape; she was a child of the winter, and she loved its light. She would often harness her father's horse to the old family sleigh and drive alone across the lake. She took her snowshoes with her, and, leaving the horse at some friendly farmhouse, she would tramp into the woods over the trackless snow. The girl would stand still and look up at the solemn pines and listen, awed by their majestic movement and the desolate loveliness all around. At such times, if the thought of marriage came, she did not put it aside with the light fancy that she wished still to remain free; she longed, in the drear solitude, for some one to sympathise with her, some one who could explain the meaning of the wordless thoughts that welled up within her, the vague response of her heart to the mystery of external beauty. Alas, among all her suitors there was not such a friend.

There was no one else in the town who cared for country walks as Eelen did—at least, no one but the schoolmaster. She met him occasionally, walking far from home; he was a quaint, old-looking man, and she thought he had a face like an angel's. She might have wished sometimes to stop and speak to him; but when they met, he always appeared to have his eyes resting on the distant horizon, and his mind seemed wrapped in some holy reverie, to the oblivion of outward things. The schoolmaster lived in the school-house on the bank of the curving river, a bit below the waterfall. He took up his abode there a few months before Eelen Reid came home from school. He had come from somewhere nearer the centres of education—had been imported, so to speak, for the special use of Haven Settlement, for the leading men of the place were a canny set and knew the worth of books. His testimonials had told of a higher standard of scholarship than was usual in such schools, and the keen Scots had snapped at the chance and engaged him without an interview; but when he arrived, they had been grievously disappointed. He was a gentle, unsophisticated man, shy as a girl, and absent-minded withal.

'Aweel, I'll not say but he'll do to put sums and writing into the youngsters' heads and teach them to spout their poems; but he's not just what I call a *man*.' This was the opinion which Macpherson, the portly owner of the mill, had delivered to his friends.

'There's something lacking, I'm thinking,' said one; 'he's thirty-six years old, and to see him

driving his cow afield, you'd say he was sixty, and him not sickly either.'

'I doubt he's getting far too high a salary,' said Macpherson solemnly. 'To pass examinations is all very well; but he's not got the grit in him that I'd like to see.'

So they had called a school committee meeting, and suggested to the new schoolmaster, as delicately as they could, that they were much disappointed with his general manner and appearance, but that, as he had come so far, they were graciously willing to keep him if he would consent to take a lower salary than that first agreed on. At this the schoolmaster grew very red, and, with much stammering, he managed to make a speech. He said that he liked the wildness and extreme beauty of the country, and the children appeared to him attractive; he by no means wished to go away; and as to salary, he would take what they thought him worth.

In this way they closed the bargain with him on terms quite satisfactory to themselves.

'But hoots,' said the stout Macpherson as he ambled home from the meeting, 'I've only half a respect for a man that can't stand up for himself;' and this sentiment was more or less echoed by them all.

Happily, the schoolmaster did not desire society. The minister's wife asked him to tea occasionally; and he confided to her that, up to that time, he had always lived with his mother, and that it was because of her death that he had left his old home, where sad memories were too great a strain upon him, and come farther west. No one else took much notice of him, partly because he took no notice of them. At the ladies' sewing meeting the doctor's wife looked round the room with an injured air and asked: 'How is it possible to ask a gentleman to tea when you know that he'll meet you in the street next morning and won't remember who you are?'

'A lady who respected herself couldn't do it,' replied Mrs Reid positively, and then in an undertone she remarked to herself, 'The gaby.'

Miss Ann Blakely pursed her lips and craned her thin neck over her work. 'As to that I don't know, Mrs Reid; no one could visit the school, as I have done, and fail to observe that the youth of the town are more obedient than ever formerly. In my opinion, a gentleman who can command the respect of the growing masculine mind'—She finished the sentence only by an expressive wave of her head.

'There is much truth in Miss Blakely's remark,' said a timid little mother of six sons.

People married early, as a general thing, in Haven Settlement, and Miss Blakely, having been accidentally overlooked, had, before he came, indulged in some soft imaginations of her own with regard to the new schoolmaster, and, like others, she was disappointed in him; but she had not yet decided 'whether,' to use her own phrase, 'he would not, after all, be better than none.' She poised this question in her mind with a nice balancing of reasons for and against for about three years, and the man who was thus the object of her interest continued to live peacefully, ignorant alike of hostile criticism and tender speculation.

It was a terrible day for the schoolmaster when the honest widow who lived with him as house-

keeper was called away by the death of a daughter-in-law to go and keep house for her son in another town. She could only tell him of her intention two weeks before it was necessary to leave; and very earnestly did he consult with her in the interval as to what he could possibly do to supply her place, for servants in Haven Settlement were rare luxuries.

'I don't know, I'm sure, sir, what you can do,' said this Mrs Sims hopelessly. 'The girls in these parts are far too proud to be hired to work in a house. Why, the best folks in town mostly does their own work; there's Mrs Reid, so rich, just has a woman to do the charing; and Eelen—that's the beauty, you know—makes the pies and keeps the house spick-and-span. But you couldn't keep your own house clean, could you, sir?—let alone the meals, and you wouldn't live long if you hadn't them.'

As the days wore on, the schoolmaster became anxious and more urgent in his appeals for advice; but he did not get encouragement to expect to find a servant of any sort, for the widow was too sincere to suggest hope when she felt none, and the difficulty was not an easy one to solve. She made various inquiries among her friends. It was suggested that the master should go to 'the boarding-house,' which was a large barn-like structure, in which business men who did not happen to have families slept in uncomfortable rooms and dined at a noisy table. Mrs Sims reported this suggestion faithfully and added: 'But it's my belief it would kill you outright.'

The schoolmaster looked at his books and the trim arrangements of his neat house, and negatived the proposition with more decision than he had ever shown before.

After a while, Mrs Sims received another idea of quite a different nature; but she did not report this so hastily—it required more finesse. It was entrusted to her care with many injunctions to be 'tactful,' and it was suggested that if there was a mess made of it, it would be her fault. The idea was nothing less than that it would be necessary for the master to marry; and it was the gaunt Miss Ann Blakely herself who confided to his present housekeeper that she should have no objections to become his bride, provided he wrote her a pretty enough, humble sort of letter that she could show to her friends.

'For, mind you, I'd not go cheap to the like of him,' she said, raising an admonishing finger, as she took leave of her friend; 'I'd rather remain single, far.'

'I think he could write the letter,' replied Mrs Sims; 'leastways, if he can't do that, I don't know what he can do, poor man.'

Having been solemnly enjoined to be careful, Mrs Sims thought so long over what she was to say before she said it, that she made herself quite nervous, and when she began, she forgot the half. Over her sewing in the sitting-room one evening she commenced the subject with a flustered little run of words. 'I'm sure such an amiable man as you are, sir, almost three years I've been in this house and never had a word from you, not one word—it is to be remarked that the widow was speaking of fault-finding, and did not by any means intend to assert that the schoolmaster had been mute—

'and you are nice in all your ways, too; if I do say it, quite the gentleman.'

'Oh!' said the schoolmaster, in a tone of surprise, not because he had heard what she said, but because he was surprised that she should begin to talk to him when he was correcting his books.

'And not a servant to be had far or near,' she went on with agitated volubility; 'and as for another like myself, of course that's too much to be hoped for.' She did not say this out of conceit, but merely as representing the actual state of affairs.

The schoolmaster began to look frightened. He was not a matter-of-fact person, but, as long as a man is a man, the prospect of being left altogether without his meals must be appalling.

'So, why you shouldn't get married, I don't know,' she added in tremulous excitement, speaking in an argumentative way, as if she had led him by an ordered process of thought to an inevitable conclusion.

'Oh!' exclaimed the schoolmaster in surprise again, this time because he *had* heard what was said.

The worst was over now; and Mrs Sims, having once suggested the desperate idea of the necessity of marriage, could proceed more calmly. She found, however, that she had to explain the notion at length before he could at all grasp it, and then she was obliged to urge its necessity for some time before he was willing to consider it. He became agitated in his turn, and, rising, walked up and down the room, his arms folded and an absent look in his eyes, as though he were thinking of things further off.

'I do not mind telling you, for I believe you are a motherly woman, Mrs Sims, that it is not the first time that the thought of marriage has crossed my mind' (with solemn hesitation). 'I have thought of it before; but I have always been hindered from giving it serious consideration from the belief that no woman would be willing to—ah—to marry me.'

'Well, of course there's some truth in that, sir,' said his faithful friend, reluctantly obliged by her conscience to say what she honestly thought.

'Just so, Mrs Sims,' said the schoolmaster with a patient sigh; 'and therefore, perhaps it will be unnecessary to discuss the subject further.'

'Still, there's no accounting for tastes; there might be some found that would.'

'It would not be necessary to find more than one,' said he, with a quiet smile. He was not a stupid man, although his intellect did not take a practical turn.

'No, that's true, sir, which makes the matter rather easier. It's always been my belief that while there is life there is hope.'

'True, true,' he replied; and then he indulged in a long fit of musing, which she more than suspected had little to do with the immediate bearing of the subject on his present case. It was necessary to rouse him, for there was no time to be lost.

'Of course I don't say that there's many that would have you; there's girls enough; but laws! they'd all make game of you if you were to go a-courting to them, and I take it

courting's not the sort of thing you're cleverest at.'

'True,' said the schoolmaster again, and again he sighed.

'But now, a good sensible woman, like Miss Blakely, as would keep you and your house clean and tidy, not to speak of cooking—I make bold to say you couldn't do better than to get such a one, if she might be so minded.'

'Who is Miss Blakely?' he asked wonderingly.

'It's her that visits the school so often; you've seen her time and again.'

'I cannot recollect her at all,' he said, after a futile attempt.

'That's just what I said,' she observed triumphantly. 'You'd be no more up to courting than cows are up to running races.—Now, as to Miss Blakely, not being as young as some, nor to say good-looking, she might not stand on the ceremony of much courting, if you just wrote her one letter, asking her quite modest and putting in a few remarks about flowers and that sort of thing, as you could do so well, being clever at writing, I give it as my opinion it's not unlikely she'd take you out of hand; not every one would, of course, but she has a kind heart, has Miss Blakely.'

'Kind is she?' said he, with a tone of interest; 'and sweet-tempered?'

'Well, as to her temper, I'll not just say; but maybe she's no worse in that respect than myself, and you and I have never had words. I've no doubt that she'd be all that you wish, sir, for the reason that you'd never give her occasion to be otherwise.'

She said much more in favour of the scheme; it required that she should say much, for the schoolmaster was not to be easily persuaded. She had, however, three strong arguments in its favour, which she reiterated again and again, with more and more assurance of certitude as she warmed to the subject. The first point was, that if he did not marry, he must either starve at home or go to the boarding-house, and at the latter place she assured him again, as she had done at first, he would probably soon die. Her second point was, that no one else would be willing to marry him except Miss Blakely; and her third, although in this matter she expressed herself with some mysterious caution—that Miss Blakely would marry him if asked. Mrs Sims bridled her head, spoke in lower tones than was her wont, and said that she had the secret of Miss Blakely's partiality from good authority. She sighed; and he heard her murmur over her sewing that the heart was always young. In fact, without saying it in so many words, she gave her listener to understand clearly that, although he could not at all recollect Miss Blakely, Miss Blakely had conceived a very lively affection for him. And this last, if she had but known it, had a stronger power of persuasion than either the prospect of starvation or a lingering death in the rude noise of a boarding-house; for the schoolmaster was tender-hearted, and, moreover, he had a beautiful soul, and supposed all women to be like his mother, whom he had loved with all his strength, and whose loss he still passionately deplored. However, Mrs Sims could gain nothing

from him but a promise to think the matter over for the next few days.

'But you'd better make haste, sir,' she said, 'for I must leave on Thursday, and now it's Saturday night. There's not overmuch time for everything—although, indeed, Mrs Graham, that goes out charing, might come in and make you your meals for a week, though it will cost you half a quarter's salary, charing is that expensive in these parts.'

MYOSOTIS.

FAIR Myosotis, where the murmuring river
Winds through the meadows green,
Where mellow grasses by the margins quiver,
Thy sweet face may be seen.

Not where the lances of the sun are gleaming,
But in some shaded spot,
Thou lov'st to pass the summer day in dreaming,
Blue-eyed Forget-me-not.

Round lonely islets, where the current gushes,
Thine eyes, so shy and sweet,
Peep from their canopies of clustering rushes
Into the light and heat.

Thou art the silvan child of Meditation,
The nursling of the streams—
Born of the wanton winds—the fair creation
Of showers and sunny gleams.

Half-hidden, thou droopest like a fragile maiden;
Thy pale love-pensive eyes
Seem with fond dreams and recollections laden
Of love that never dies.

Thy mission is to waken memories tender
In distant hearts and far,
And thrill again the soul with Love's soft splendour,
Which Time in vain would mar.

Bloom on, fair buds! the brook shall bear thy mission
To city haunts, and make
Fond hearts responsive beat to that union,
Which absence may not break.

Steadfast alike in sunshine and in shower,
Thine eyes of azure blue;
Emblem art thou of Constancy, sweet flower,
Of all that's fair and true!

GERALD B. GREENE.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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